

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed September 13, 2007 and references cited therein have been reviewed. Applicants have canceled claims 9, amended claims 1-8 and 10-27, and added new claims 28-48.

Applicant noted that claims 5, 11 and 27 would be allowable over the cited art of record if placed in independent form. Accordingly, such claims have been amended to be independent claims. Applicant submits that claims 5, 11 and 27 are in allowable form.

SECTION 112 REJECTION

Claims 10 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112(2) for not having an antecedent basis for the limitation "cover." Applicant has amended claims 10 and 26 to correct this error. Applicant submits that all of the pending claims are in proper form pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §112(2).

SECTIONS 102 AND 103 REJECTIONS

Claims 1-4, 6, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Jennings (4,400,591). Claims 7, 8, 14 and 17-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jennings in view of Bloomfield (5,224,474). Claims 12, 13, 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Jennings in view of Wang (7,006,648).

Applicants note that Jennings (4,400,591) was not included on the Notice of References cited by the Examiner, nor did Applicants submit this reference to the Patent Office. Applicants request that Jennings (4,400,591) be listed by the Examiner, if such patent has not already been listed by the Examiner.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the orientation of the speaker and the reflector of the voice amplifier when the voice amplifier is connected to a mask. Specifically, 1) the speaker has a

front face that faces inwardly of the mask when the voice amplifier is attached to the mask, 2) the reflector surface of the sound reflector faces outwardly of the mask and toward the front face of the speaker when the voice amplifier is attached to the mask, 3) the speaker is mounted such that the front face of the speaker faces towards the reflector surface of the sound reflector, 4) the front face of the speaker is designed to generate sound waves that travel toward the reflector surface, and 5) the reflector surface is designed to reflect the sound waves generated from the speaker back toward the speaker and outwardly from the mask when the amplifier is attached to the mask.

This orientation of the speaker and reflector in a voice amplifier is not disclosed or taught by Jennings. Jennings discloses and teaches that the speaker 26 has a front face that is faced in the opposite direction of the front face of the speaker defined in claim 1. The Examiner indicated that surfaces 18, 14 and 26 are reflector surfaces. Surface 26 is part of the speaker, thus cannot be part of the reflector. Furthermore, if surfaces 14 and 26 could be characterized as reflector surfaces, such surfaces would reflect sound waves toward the mask, not outwardly from the mask as required in claim 1. Surface 18 could be considered a surface that would reflect sound waves outwardly from the mask; however, the front face of the speaker is facing away from surface 18, which orientation is contrary to the orientation of the speaker defined in claim 1. For at least these reasons, claim 1 and all of the claims dependent therefrom are not anticipated by Jennings.

Claim 12 has been amended to clarify the orientation of the speaker in the voice amplifier. As discussed above with regard to claim 1, this orientation of the speaker as defined in claim 12 is opposite to the speaker orientation disclosed and illustrated in Jennings. Wang is also absent any teaching regarding the speaker orientation defined in claim 12. Indeed, Wang has no teachings with regard to a voice amplifier that is used on a mask. For at least these reasons, claim 12 and all the

claims dependent therefrom are not obvious in view of the cited art of record.

Claim 15, similar to claim 12, has been amended to clarify the orientation of the speaker in the voice amplifier. As discussed above with regard to claim 12, this orientation of the speaker as defined in claim 15 is opposite to the speaker orientation disclosed and illustrated in Jennings. As also discussed above, Wang provides no teachings to overcome this deficiency of Jennings. Claim 15 has also been amended to clarify the location of the circuit board of the voice amplifier with respect to the speaker. Jennings clearly illustrated a circuit board 30 positioned directly behind the magnetic assembly of speaker 26. Such teachings are contrary to the circuit board limitation defined in claim 15. For at least these reasons, claim 15 and all the claims dependent therefrom are not obvious in view of the cited art of record.

Claim 19, similar to claims 12 and 15, has been amended to clarify the orientation of the speaker in the voice amplifier. As discussed above with regard to claims 12 and 15, this orientation of the speaker as defined in claim 19 is opposite to the speaker orientation disclosed and illustrated in Jennings. Bloomfield does not have any disclosure or teachings that overcome this deficiency of Jennings. For at least this reason, claim 19 and all the claims dependent therefrom are not obvious in view of the cited art of record.

Applicants submit the claims presently pending in the above-identified patent application are in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
FAY SHARPE LLP

By: 

BRIAN E. TURUNG
Reg. No. 35,394
1100 Superior Avenue, 7th Floor
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-2579
Telephone: (216) 861-5582
Facsimile: (216) 241-1666

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